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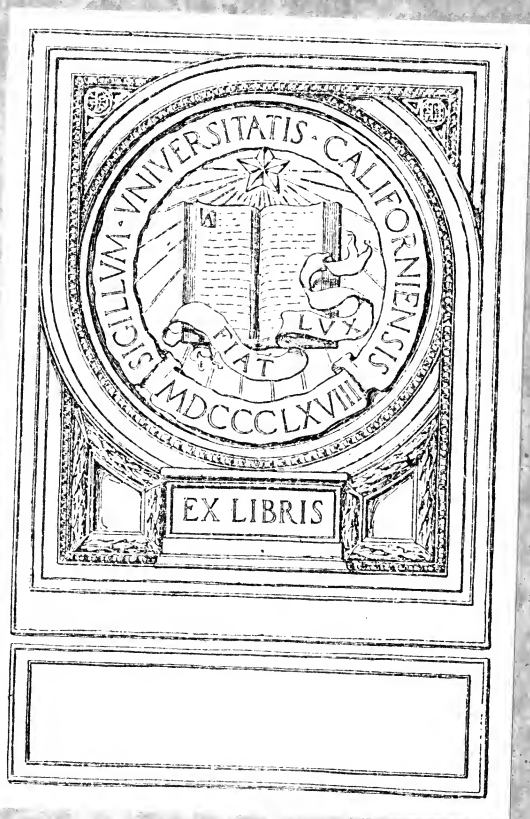
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[Continued on p. 3.]

TEXTS FOR STUDENTS, No. 9

GENERAL EDITORS: CAROLINE A. J. SKEEL, D.Lit.;
H. J. WHITE, D.D.; J. P. WHITNEY, D.D., D.C.L.

THE INSCRIPTION
ON THE
STELE OF MÉŠA'

COMMONLY CALLED
THE MOABITE STONE

THE TEXT IN MOABITE AND HEBREW,
WITH TRANSLATION

BY

H. F. B. COMPSTON, M.A.

VICAR OF BREDWARDINE, HEREFORD

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PREFACE

THE text adopted in this edition is that of the late Dr. Driver's Hebrew transcription in the Appendix to the Introduction of his *Notes on the Hebrew Text . . . of the Books of Samuel*, 2nd edition, 1913, by the kind permission of the Delegates of the Clarendon Press, Oxford.

The Moabite (Phœnician) re-transcription has been made from the above-mentioned text. This feature of the present edition—new in such works—may, it is hoped, be of use to persons beginning the study of Semitic palaeography. It should be noted that the type used represents a more or less standardized Phœnician script, and is not a facsimile of that of the Inscription, several letters of which (*e.g.* y, k, q, s, t) represent a more ancient fashion of writing.

I wish to acknowledge indebtedness to Dr. Driver's translation and commentary, Dr. W. H. Bennett's *The Moabite Stone* (1911), and the *Tafel* in Smend and Socin: *Die Inschrift des Königs Méša von Moab* (1886).

H. F. B. C.

Jan. 22, 1919.

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INTRODUCTION

THE Inscription here set forth is accepted, with practical unanimity on the part of experts, as authentic. It was chiselled on a monument of basalt, by order of the Méša', King of Moab, who is mentioned in 2 Kings iii. 4, and who here recounts his victories over Israel, to whom Moab had long been subject. The date must be somewhere about mid-ninth century B.C., the era of Omri and Ahab, Elijah and Elisha, and Jehu. Line 7 may allude to the overthrow of Omri's dynasty by Jehu, *circa* 843 B.C.

The interest of this famous monument is manifold.

(a) To the student of palæography it offers a good specimen of Phœnician script, parent of Alphabets, used not only by Moab but by Israel (as shown *e.g.* by the Siloam Inscription, eighth century B.C.); the older portions of the Old Testament were, in all probability, written in this script.

(b) The linguist can here study the essential features of the Grammar and Syntax, along with a useful vocabulary, of the Moabite language, separated from Hebrew by merely dialectical differences. A Hebrew student will find the inscription very like historical narrative in the Old Testament.

(c) The historian finds in the Inscription a valuable contribution to the little-known story of a people long extinct.

(d) The theologian sees evidence confirming what modern Biblical study has revealed as to Semitic religion. For there are, *e.g.* references to K^emôš, the god of Moab, and to Yahweh God of Israel, and His shrine at Nebo, with allusions to the treatment of con-

quered cities "devoted," *i.e.* put under the ban (*hérem*), to the national god.

The stele, or rather the upper portion of the original monument, measuring $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet in height, 2 feet in width, and 2 feet in thickness, was discovered in 1868 by the Rev. F. A. Klein, of the Church Missionary Society, on the site of the ancient Moabite city of Dibon. Its existence was known, from the report of natives, shortly previous to this event, to Monsieur Clermont-Ganneau, the eminent French archaeologist. The great interest shown by Europeans, and their offers to purchase, led the Arabs in the neighbourhood to break it up, possibly with the object of selling the fragments at fancy prices. Fire was kindled beneath the stone, cold water dashed on the top of it, and the priceless monument was soon cracked in pieces. Happily, before this stupid act of vandalism was perpetrated, rubbings of the inscription had been secured. Later on most of the fragments were recovered, the missing portions restored with the help of the rubbings, and the Stele of Méša' now stands in the Louvre. There is a facsimile in the British Museum.

The Inscription may be studied more fully with the aid of the works mentioned in the Preface to the present edition and other works named in their bibliographies, or in the various Dictionaries of the Bible.

Students offering the subject for examination should practise transcription in Phœnician and Hebrew, and should add vowel-points to the latter. This would prove a useful exercise. After the revision of his vocalization the student should, with a fine pen, point the Hebrew text on pp. 11-13, adding in the margin, or on an inserted fly-leaf, any various readings or alternative pointings.

INSCRIPTION OF MÉŠA^v

I. THE MOABITE TEXT IN PHOENICIAN SCRIPT.

Words and letters within square brackets are restored conjecturally. Overlined letters are more or less uncertain of identification.

- אז . גחמ . ילמ ?? מממ . יג . מממ . יגח 1
 . ימלמ . גחמ . לו . ילמ . תגח | תיגמ 2
 ילמ . יגחמ . תמ
 . תח~ . תמגז . מוחמ | תגח . אבח . תח 3
 [ת . תמ]ג | זבחממ . מממל
 . תממ . ימלמז . לממ . תיממז . תמ . ממ 4
 אמז | תחממ . לממ . תיממז
 . גחמ . תח . ימממ . למממ . ילמ . ת 5
 אחמ . מממ . יגחמ . תמ . יגמ . יממ
 . חז . ממ . אמממ . זממ . זמלממ | זח 6
 7 . אמח . תמממ | גחמ . תח . יממ
 . אמח . לממממ | זמממ . זמ . אחמ 7
 [אח] . תח . תממ . מממ . ימל . אמח

• ԽՐԹԿ. ՅՄԽ. ՅԳ. ԳԿԽԿ | ՔԳԳՅԿ. Ի 8

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983.447.97406.πγ | 74894.7 17

[7. f] * . ywy . 00xy | 3fy

- . πγγλ . ψα . θακκγ . αγαπ . πλ 18
 ῑ̄ῑ̄ . αβγ . λκαωπ . γλψγ | ωψγ
 | πδ . αψθαλβδ . βδ . θωπγ . ραπ 19
 [γ π]γγγ . ωψγ . αωαλπγ
 | αωα . λγ . ωκ . βταψ . θκψγ . θακ 20
 . α~θακγ . ραπδ . ακωκγ
 . αθααθ . πταβ . γβκ | βγπα . λθ . τακλ 21
 ταψαγ . βαοπα . ταψα
 . γβκγ . απαοω . πταβ . γβκγ | λγπα 22
 κγ | αταλαψ . πταβ
 . πταω . γβκγ . γλψ . τα . πταβ . γβ 23
 ῑ̄ααδδ . βπ[ψλ . θγ]ωκβ . πκλγ
 ααδδ . ααβ . ααδδ . βκ . ααγ | ααβ 24
 λ̄ . γω . γπα . λγλ . αψκγ . αθ
 . πταγ . γβκγ | αταπα . αα . ωκ . ψγ 25
 ακκδ . αθααλ . τααγγα
 . αοαο . πταβ . γβκ | λκαωπ . [π] 26
 . ββακδ . τακψα . πταω . γβκγ
 . καβ . πγ . ταδ . τα . πταβ . γβκ 27
 . βπθ . πγ . αρα . πταβ . γβκ | κβ

- . יגא . ל . נ . יאא . יגא . ו 28
 ל . יאא | יאאא
- . יאא . יאא . יאא . יאא 29
 יגא . יאא | יאאא . ל
- | יאאא . יאא . יאא [א]אא [. יאא] . נ 30
 אאא . יאא . יאא . יאאא . יאאא . יאא
- . יאא . יאאא | יאאא . יאא 31
 אא . יאא . יאא . יאא
- . יאאא . יאא . יאא . יאא . יאאא 32
 אאא | יאאא
- . ל . יאא . יאא . יאא . יאא [אאא] 33
 אא . יאא . יאא
- יאא | יאא . יאא 34

II. THE TEXT IN HEBREW SQUARE SCRIPT.

Words and letters within square brackets are restored conjecturally. Overlined letters are more or less uncertain of identification.

- 1 אנך . משע . בן . כמש . ? ? מלך . מאב . הר
 2 יבני | אבי . מלך . על . מאב . שלשן . שת . ואנך . מלב
 3 תי . אחר . אבי | ואעש . הבמת . זאת . לכמש .
 בקרחה | ב[מת . י]
 4 שע . כי . השעני . מכל . * השלכן . וכי . הראני . בכל .
 שנאי | עמר
 5 י . מלך . ישראל . ויענו . את . מאב . ימן . רבן . כי .
 יאנף . כמש . באר
 6 צה | ויחלפה . בנה . ויאמר . גם . הא . אענו . את .
 מאב | בימי . אמר . כ
 7 וארא . בה . ובבתה | וישראל . אבד . אבד . עלם .
 וירש . עמרי . את . [אר]
 8 ין . מהרבא | וישב . בה . ימה . וחצי . ימי . בנה .
 ארבען . שת . דיש
 9 בה . כמש . בימי | ואבן . את . בעלמען . ואעש . בה .
 האשוח . ואבן

* The ה in Driver's text is obviously a misprint for ה . See translation. The Moabite is clearly א .

- 10 את . קריתן | ואש . גר . ישב . בארץ . עמרת . מעלם .
ויבן . לה . מלך . י
- 11 שראל . את . עמרת | ואלתחם . בקר . ואחזה |
ואהרג . את . כל . העם . [מ]
- 12 הקר . רית . לכמש . ולמאב | ואשב . משם . את .
אראל . דורה . וא[ס]
- 13 חבה . לפני . כמש . בקרית | ואשב . בה . את . אש .
שרן . ואת . אש
- 14 מחרת | ויאמר . לי . כמש . לך . אחז . את . נבה .
על . ישראל | ואֵ
- 15 הלך . בללה . ואלתחם . בה . מבקע . השחרת . עד .
הצהרם | ואֵ
- 16 זה . ואהרג . כלֵה . שבעת . אלפן . ג[ב]רן . וגרן |
וגברת . ו[גר]
- 17 ת . ורחמת | כי . לעשתר . כמש . החרמתה | ואקה .
משם . א[ת . כ]
- 18 לי . יהוה . ואסחב . הם . לפני . כמש | ומלך . ישראל .
בנה . אֵת
- 19 יהין . וישב . בה . בהלתחמה . בי | ויגרשה . כמש .
מפני [ו]
- 20 אקה . ממאב . מאתן . אש . כל . רשה | ואשאה .
ביהין . ואחזה .

- 21 לספת . על . דיבן | אנך . בנתי . קרחה . חמת .
היערן . וחמת
- 22 העפל | ואנך . בנתי . שעריה . ואנך . בנתי .
מגדלתה | וא
- 23 נך . בנתי . בת . מלך . ואנך . עשתי . כלאי . האש
[וח . למ] ין . בקרב
- 24 הקר | ובר . אנ . בקרב . הקר . בקרחה . ואמר . לכל .
העם . עשו . ל
- 25 כם . אש . בר . בביתה | ואנך . כרתי . המכרתת .
לקרחה . באסר
- 26 [י] . ישראל | אנך . בנתי . ערער . ואנך . עשתי .
המסלת . בארנן .
- 27 אנך . בנתי . בת . במת . כי . הרם . הא | אנך . בנתי .
בצר . כי . עין .
- 28 ש . דיבן . חמשן . כי . כל . דיבן . משמעת |
ואנך . מלכ
- 29 תי . מאת . בקרן . אשר . יספתי . על . הארץ | ואנך .
בנת
- 30 י . [את .] מהר [ב]א . ובת . דבלתן | ובת . בעלמען .
ואשא . שם . את . נקד
- 31 צאן . הארץ | וחורנן . ישב . בה . בת . וק . אש
- 32 דיאמר . לי . כמש . רד . הלתחם . בחורנן | וארד
- 33 [ויש] בה . כמש . בימי . ועל . דה . משם . עש
- 34 שת . שרק . ואנ

III. TRANSLATION.

Words in italics are required by English idiom: they are not in the original. The transliteration of proper names is in accordance with the notation in the Hebrew Grammar of Gesenius. Words and letters within square brackets are restored conjecturally. Words within curved brackets are alternative renderings, &c.

- 1 I am Mēša' son of Kēmōš ? king of Mō'āḥ the Da-
- 2 -ibonite. My father reigned over Mō'āḥ thirty years
and I reign-
- 3 -ed after my father. And I made this high place for
Kēmōš in Ḳrḥh.* [High place of sal-]
- 4 -vation, for he had saved me from all the assailants (?),
and because he had caused me to look upon † all
my foes. 'Omr-
- 5 -î was king of Yisrā'ēl, and he afflicted Mō'āḥ days
many, for Kēmōš was angry with his la-
- 6 -nd. And his son succeeded him, and he too said I
will afflict Mō'āḥ. In my days he said s[o],
- 7 and I looked upon † him and upon his house. And
Israel utterly perished everlastingly. And 'Omrî
possessed the [la-]
- 8 -nd of Mēhēdēḥā. And (Israel) dwelt therein, his
days and half the days of his son, forty years; and
- 9 Kēmōš restored it in my days. And I built Bā'al-mō'ôn
and I made therein the reservoir (?), and I built

* line 3. Perhaps "Ḳrēḥah" or "Ḳorḥah."

† lines 4, 7. "Look upon," i.e., with exultation over a fallen foe.
Cf. Ps. lix. 10 E.V.

- 10 Kīryātēn. Now the men of Gad had dwelt in the
land of 'aṭārôt from of old; and the king of Yi[srā'ēl
(*beginning of line 11*)] built for himself
- 11 'aṭārôt. And I fought against the city and took it.
And I slew all the people [from]
- 12 the city, a gazing-stock for Kēmôš and for Mō'āb. And
I restored (*or captured*) from thence the altar-
hearth (?) of Dāwḏōh (*or its tutelary spirit?*), and
I drag-
- 13 -ged it before Kēmôš in Kēriyyôt. And I placed
therein the men of Šrn* and the men of
- 14 Mhrt.† And Kēmôš said unto me Go, seize Nēḥōh
against Yisrā'ēl. And I
- 15 went by night, and fought against it from dawn unto
noon. And I sei-
- 16 -zed it and slew all of it, 7000 men and men-sojourners ‡
and women & [women-sojourner-] ‡
- 17 s, and damsels; for to 'aštar-Kēmôš had I devoted it.
And I took from thence the [ves-]
- 18 -sels of Yahweh, and dragged them before Kēmôš.
Now the king of Yisrā'ēl had built
- 19 Yáhaš, and dwelt therein while he fought against
me. And Kēmôš drove him away from before me,
and
- 20 I took from Mō'āb 200 men, all the head-men thereof;
and I brought them up against Yáhaš, and seized it
- 21 to add unto Daiḥōn. I built Kṛhḥ,§ the wall of
Yē'ārīn (*or the woods*), and the wall of

* line 13. Šārōn (?)

† line 14. Maḥarāt (?)

‡ line 16. *I.e.*, recognised settlers. Cf. 2 Sam. i. 13.

§ line 21. See note, line 3.

- 22 'ōpel (*or* the Acropolis). And I built the gates thereof, and I built the towers thereof. And
- 23 I built the king's house, and I made the two reser-
[voirs? for wa]ter in the middle of
- 24 the city. Now cistern there was none in the middle of the city, in Kṛḥh.* And I said to all the people, Make to
- 25 you every man a cistern in his house. And I cut out the cutting for Kṛḥh * by means of the prisoner-
- 26 [-s captured from] Yisrā'ēl. I built 'ārō'ēr and I made the high-road by the Arnon.
- 27 I built Bēt-bāmôt for it was destroyed. I built Béṣer for ruins
- 28 [had it become. And the head-me]n of Daiḥôn were 50, for all Daiḥôn was loyal. And I reign-
- 29 -ed [over] 100 in the cities which I added to the land. And I buil-
- 30 -t M^ehēd[^e]bā and Bet-diḥlātēn, and Bēt-bá'al-m^eôn; and I brought thither the sheep-masters (?) †
- 31 sheep of the land. And Ḥôrônēn, there dwelt therein ??
- 32 [And] K^emôš said unto me, Go down, fight against Ḥôrônēn. And I went down
- 33 and K^emôš [resto]red it in my days. And from thence
- 34 And I

* lines 24, 25. See note, line 3. † line 30. See 2 Kings iii. 4.

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